

Gaithersburg Day Laborer Task Force Meeting
Tuesday, January 24, 2006, 7:30 p.m.
Casey Community Center, Room A

I. Approval of Summary of 1/17/06 Meeting

A motion was made to approve the summary of the 1/17/06 meeting. The motion passed.

II. Dialogue with Members of the Day Laborer Work Force

A dialogue was planned with the day laborers. However, the advanced list of questions was sent out late and the task force was informed that only two day laborers were present to participate. In order to provide an opportunity for greater participation from the day laborer community and to allow them ample time to familiarize themselves with the questions, this agenda item will be tabled until the next meeting. Rev. Rocha was provided an extra copy of the questions which he will share with the day laborers. He will also relay to the day laborers the task force's invitation to attend and participate in the next meeting.

Alternately, the task force agreed to work on a structure to facilitate information gathering and research.

Review and Expansion of Option Spreadsheet

Chair Prentiss Searles presented the task force with a spreadsheet for use in organizing information gathered in addressing charges 2 – 4, as stated in Resolution R-102-05, as well as issues relevant to those charges. The task force proceeded to review the spreadsheet and further define areas to be researched.

It was noted that charge #1 had been completed and that Barbara Fahey had written a draft of the required report. However, factual information was reported to be missing from the report. Task force members agreed to review the report and make changes in bold or use the track changes option to amend the report. Barbara would then incorporate the changes and send an amended copy for the task force to review. It was stressed that the full report would still be a work-in-progress and that once all of the information had been gathered, the task force would decide how alternate views should be represented. It was suggested that vote counts taken on various options could be included.

In regard to charge #2, the spreadsheet reflected issues brainstormed by task force members at the last meeting. Additional discussion focused on identifying options for further research that would help resolve those issues. Chair Prentiss Searles

stated that he would provide an updated spreadsheet to be included as part of this meeting summary.

At this point in the meeting an individual attempted to record the meeting. Based on the belief that recording the meeting was not allowed without the consent of all parties present, and as three individuals in the audience opposed the recording, the individual was asked to turn off the recorder. He complied and indicated that he would contact the City Attorney to challenge the decision and seek clarification on the recording of future meetings.

Review of the spreadsheet continued. All options were described in detail and subcommittees were formed for each option.

Option A, "Build a Day Laborer Center", generated discussion in regard to whether the abundance of information published on day laborer centers would lessen the need for site visits. It was noted that the task force needed to visit centers such as Herndon, Wheaton and Silver Spring to see first hand how they operated. It was noted that research should be used in addition to site visits. For clarification Assistant City Manager Tony Tomasello stated that charge #2 of Resolution R-102-05 was intended as a two-part charge, one addressing labor center initiatives and once addressing non-labor center (program) initiatives. In regard to the labor center initiatives, it was stressed that the City Council specifically wanted a study of the Wheaton and Silver Spring centers. The task force also acknowledged the need to determine if there were other piecemeal initiatives available and how they compared to the "one-stop" shopping offered by CASA de Maryland. Chair Prentiss Searles requested that Subcommittee "A" begin formulating a list of day laborer center questions to be presented to the task force for consideration.

Option B, "Pass Ordinances to Prevent Soliciting Jobs from Parking Lots, Public Streets and Sidewalks," dealt with identifying which ordinances had been passed, determining their effectiveness and identifying those that have been found to be unconstitutional. It was noted that some ordinances dealing with these issues were already on the books. It was agreed that City staff would gather the relevant ordinances and forward them to task force subcommittee B.

Option C, "Utilize Existing Employment Centers," focused on identifying existing employment centers and requirements for them and determining how they would work for Gaithersburg. It was noted that some centers offered additional services. The spread sheet was adjusted accordingly to capture that information.

Under "Other Options" was "Do Nothing" which focused on exploring the ramifications of doing nothing. It was suggested that Mesa, CA and Farmingville, Long Island, NY could be queried as to what was behind their decision to do nothing and the outcomes of that decision.

It was noted that workers had a real need for protection from injury. It was stated that once each section was more fully developed, it could be determined where this component would fit.

The issue of “a fair day’s labor for a fair day’s pay was also raised? Given the county’s position that they were not the employers of day laborers, it was unclear as to who would be responsible for ensuring fair wages and how it would be done.

In concluding the spreadsheet review, Chair Prentiss Searles encouraged written submissions of additional options for the task force to explore. Due to time constraints, it was noted that the Option #4 would be reviewed at the next meeting.

In order to facilitate research within other municipalities, staff was asked to secure a letter from the Mayor or his designee introducing the task force, verifying its charge and requesting cooperation and assistance.

In order to track progress, it was decided that each group would draft a subcommittee project outline, including deadlines for completion of associated tasks. Additionally, subcommittee chairs would provide weekly updates to the task force members. Subcommittees are expected to provide their first set of updates on February 7, 2006. Member Dan Searles suggested scheduling in advance for final presentation of each option. He recommended that the “Do Nothing” option be scheduled first and offered to prepare that option for presentation on February 7, 2006.

The subcommittees discussed the need for additional meetings to complete the tasks associated with their respective options. The task force stated that it was their expectation that subcommittees would need to meet between meetings and authorized the subcommittees to meet outside of the regular Tuesday meetings.

Assistant City Manager Tony Tomasello noted that breaking up into subgroups was expected but reminded all task force members that all deliberations and data gathering needed to be, to the greatest extent possible, public.

III. Action Plan for Priority “Issue #6” (Areas Identified for Further Research)

Addressed in Review and Expansion of Option Spreadsheet.

IV. Old Business

- Plan agendas for next 2 – 3 meetings
 - Next meeting
 - 45 minute dialogue with day laborers
 - Continue review of spread sheet, picking up with charge #4

- Presentation by subcommittee chairs of project outlines and deadlines for respective options

➤ Review of timeline/template

Addressed in Review and Expansion of Option Spreadsheet

V. New Business

➤ Farmingville Documentary

Cathy Drzyzgula offered to share a video she purchased documenting the efforts of a Long Island town in dealing with the day laborer issue. The group decided that they would pass the video around rather than try to schedule a time for a group viewing of the 78 minute video. Cathy Drzyzgula agreed to be in charge of circulating the video.

VI. Adjournment

The meeting adjourned at 9:03 p.m.